



## Colorectal Cancer Campaign Overview – 2009

### Campaign Background

- Multiyear, multimedia campaign launched in March, 1999
- Educates and informs men and women aged 50 and older – the age group at greatest risk of developing colorectal cancer – about the importance of regular colorectal cancer screening

### Partners

- State Health Departments, the District of Columbia and Tribes/Tribal Organizations
- National Colorectal Cancer Research Alliance, a program of the Entertainment Industry Foundation

### Target Audiences

#### Primary: Men and women aged 50 years and older

- **Sub-audiences:** Medicare recipients  
African Americans  
Hispanics
- **Secondary:** Health Professionals

### Media Materials

- Television and Radio Public Service Announcements (PSAs) \*
- Print PSAs \*
- Posters
- Dioramas
- Brochures \*
- Patient Education Fact Sheets \*
- Health Professional Fact Sheet
- *Screen for Life* web site \*
- Newspaper Articles\*
- Video and Audio News Releases\*

*\*Available in both English and Spanish*

### Campaign Messages

- Colorectal cancer is the second leading cancer killer in the United States, affecting both men and women, especially those over age 50.
- If you're over 50, see your doctor and get screened for colorectal cancer.
- Screening for colorectal cancer saves lives.
- Screening helps prevent colorectal cancer. Screening tests help find precancerous polyps so they can be removed **before** they turn into cancer.
- Screening helps find colorectal cancer early, when treatment can be very effective.
- Because polyps or cancer in the colon or rectum don't always cause symptoms, it is important to be screened regularly for colorectal cancer.
- Many insurance plans, including Medicare, help pay for colorectal cancer screening.

## Campaign Development

Development of *Screen for Life* messages and materials is based on an extensive review of communication and behavioral science literature and formative research conducted by CDC. Since 1999, approximately 170 focus groups have been conducted in more than 25 cities across the country to assess knowledge, behaviors and screening practices of the target audiences and to test campaign messages and materials. The groups have been segmented by gender, age (50-64 and over age 65), and ethnicity (mixed ethnicities, African American, and Hispanic). Input also is sought from State Health Departments on the types of materials that would be most helpful to local efforts.

## Distribution

PSAs are distributed nationally to a broad range of television, radio and print media outlets. The television PSAs are distributed to approximately 1,000 TV stations in all 210 U.S. media markets, as well as to national networks and national and regional cable systems. Radio PSAs are distributed to approximately 1,200 radio stations that appeal to older adults, African Americans, and/or Hispanics. Print PSAs are sent to approximately 2,000 magazines and 6,500 daily and weekly newspapers. Airport dioramas are distributed to approximately 50 major U.S. airports.

Print and broadcast materials also are sent to State Health Departments and Tribes/Tribal Organizations, and are available on the campaign web site, [www.cdc.gov/cancer/ScreenforLife](http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/ScreenforLife). The web materials are designed for downloading and duplicating for immediate use. The site also serves as a resource for health educators, health professionals, state and local organizations, and others interested in colorectal cancer.

## Campaign Evaluation

Process evaluation data (through May 2009) show that *Screen for Life* TV, radio and print PSAs have generated more than 6.5 billion audience impressions (the number of times the spots have been seen or heard by audience members.) This donated ad space and time is worth an estimated \$80 million.

CDC monitors colorectal cancer screening rates over time through the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) – a continuous, national telephone survey – and through the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS). Findings from BRFSS and NHIS show that testing among adults aged 50 or older, the age group for whom screening is recommended, is low. Only about 50% of those eligible received screening tests for colorectal cancer within the recommended screening intervals. Future screening trends will continue to be monitored with BRFSS and NHIS and will provide ecological measures of screening behaviors over time.

## Local Tagging and State/Program Partners

Each year, CDC supports educational efforts of State Health Departments, the District of Columbia, and Tribes/Tribal Organizations by designing *Screen for Life* materials that can be localized. For example, CDC provides "local tagging" of television PSAs, which allows State Health Departments and Tribes/Tribal Organizations to add local information to the closing graphic of PSAs – e.g. "Brought to you by the Maryland Department of Public Health." All 50 State Health Departments, 2 Tribes/Tribal Organizations, and the District of Columbia are partners with *Screen for Life*, choosing local tagging and other community projects utilizing *Screen for Life* materials.



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